

MINUTES
Small Business Assistance Committee
Greater Southwest Houston Chamber of Commerce
Monday, October 6, 2003
11:39 a.m.-1:10 p.m.

Present:

- Art Beane
- Janell Bonner
- Peter Cook, *Chair*
- Arnold Goldberg
- Phillip Knox
- Dick Myers
- Katherine Swarts, *Secretary*
- Kevin Tucker
- Teri Walter
- Sharon Williams
- Cheryl Wise
- Trish Wise, *Chamber Staff*

Business in a Bag:

- Houston Community College and Pierpont have offered to supply speakers for upcoming programs. Chamber members Shelley Nadel and Jerry LaFleur are also interested.
- Most workshops so far have drawn at least 10-12 attendees (the recent "Rocket Scientist" was an exception).
- The Committee hopes to progress to a two-sessions-per-workshop, one-session-per-week format.
- Dick will be in charge of scheduling upcoming programs. The November-December schedule should be completed by November 1.
- The Committee debated the possibilities of scheduling workshops on different days of the week. No definite conclusions were reached.
- Kevin suggested allowing at least a month of lead time between an announcement and a workshop.
- Peter suggested starting a cross-promotion program in cooperation with the *Bellaire Buzz* and other local publications.
- Inviting non-members to be speakers is still a matter of some concern.

Chamber Website:

- Phillip outlined the options and advantages of adding a portal system (used by many Chambers of Commerce). The cost (around \$10,000 for the first year, considerably less afterward) is a matter of concern to Chamber leadership.
- Another matter of concern is the possible need for extra staff to keep a portal updated.

- Peter suggested preparing a formal proposal for the Chamber regarding the use of a portal.
- The Committee debated options and problems at length.
- There have recently been some problems with the online directory's Contact Name search function. Trish promised to look into the matter.

Publishing Program:

- Katherine presented a brief overview of the work done so far on the "Make the Most of Your Membership" booklet.
- Leaders of other Committees will be asked to contribute to the "Membership" booklet.
- Katherine will send a copy of the booklet outline to Chamber leadership.
- Cheryl suggested publishing the booklet (and upcoming ones) through a Print-on-Demand arrangement with Kinko's, to reduce the need for storage space at the Chamber office.
- Arnold suggested using the booklets as a tool to attract new Chamber members.

Breakfast Program:

- There will be no monthly breakfast in December. The program will resume in January, probably with Shameless Self-Promotion (to allow for fewer attendees at a second-Thursday meeting).

The next Committee meeting will be at the Chamber office, Monday, November 3, at 11:30 a.m.